

CONCORDIA



Dec. 10, 1997

Stingers

Concordia kicker to play in Shrine Classic

Concordia Stingers kicker/punter Dave Miller-Johnston has been selected to play in the 73rd annual East-West Shrine Football Classic at Stanford Stadium in Palo Alto, Calif., on Saturday, Jan. 10 at 4 p.m. eastern.

"I was thrilled when I found out," said Miller-Johnston who will handle both the kicking and punting duties for the East. "I think it is a good opportunity to perform and have a good game in front of a big audience and some important people.

"Monday night when I found out I allowed myself to be excited, but now it's business. It's about seizing the opportunity in front of me."

Miller-Johnston has signed with Dr. Ping of Michigan, the same agent who orchestrated former Stinger Mark Montreuil's ascent into the NFL. (He was drafted by the San Diego Chargers in 1995.) Miller-Johnston hopes to follow the same path.

"I certainly have my eye on a professional career," he said. "I can't think of too many things better than being paid to kick a football."

Concordia offensive co-ordinator and former CFL kicker Gerry McGrath likes Miller-Johnston's chances.

"He is probably the hardest worker on our team," McGrath said of his star pupil. "He has made tremendous gains in kicking ability. He's done a great job improving his body in the weight room. I think he is an NFL prospect as a punter."

Some very successful professional players have taken part in the East-West Classic, including Roger Staubach (1965), John Elway (1983), Randall Cunningham (1985), Brett Favre (1991) and Jeff Garcia (1994). Concordia offensive lineman Paul Vaida played in the game in 1991 and then went on to enjoy a six-year career with the CFL's Saskatchewan Roughriders.

Of the 74 players participating in the 1997 Classic, 48 were drafted by NFL teams.

Miller-Johnston, a 25-year old native of Greely, Ont., will join offensive tackle Bob Beveridge of the University of British Columbia Thunderbirds as the only two Canadian representatives at the Classic. Seventy-six of the best American seniors will also participate in the oldest college all-star football game in existence.

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